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Daniel Ryerson, Box 805, Homestead, Florida.

HYBRID BACK BULB CUTTINGS

This is what many of you have told me you've been waiting for -- a new offering of HYBRID BACK BULB CUTTINGS. If you want your share of back bulbs from top quality Late Fall and Winter blooming Hybrids, please do not delay in ordering. There are never sufficient really good back bulbs to keep pace with the demand for them.

More and more Orchid Growers are discovering how simple and economical it is to increase their stocks of fine, blooming size Orchid plants via the back bulb route.

If you have never tried to propagate back bulb cuttings, the enclosed "Let's Talk About Back Bulb Propagation" article should be of help to you.

While every cutting is carefully labelled with the correct hybrid name, it is impractical to compile the same type of listings used for the sale of Mature Plants or Seedlings. The reason is simple: back bulbs are acquired as the mature plants from which they are taken need repotting. Not all plants of any given hybrid will bloom simultaneously, nor will they require repotting simultaneously. Neither do all of them have back bulbs that should be removed. It follows that, among any 500 Hybrid Back Bulb Cuttings, not more than three to five will be hybrids of the same name.

Moreover, it is wise to sell these cuttings practically as rapidly as they accumulate, for they cannot be kept in their unrooted, dormant stage indefinitely. Thus, any listing would need to be changed constantly, as cuttings are sold and replaced by others.

Therefore, while I will do my best to send you a good assortment, the actual selection of your cuttings will have to be left to my judgment.

Each cutting has one or more live eyes; each is tagged with its correct name. All are husky Cattleya, Lc, Bc or Blc hybrids, and if you follow the enclosed instructions, you should be successful in starting every one of them. Most should bloom in two years. But, as I will have no personal control over your methods of handling the cuttings, I can make no positive guarantee as to how well they will perform for you.

WHILE THEY LAST, THESE HYBRID CUTTINGS ARE PRICED AS FOLLOWS:

Single Hybrid Cutting (colored)....\$2.00; (white or White-col.-Lip)...\$2.50

Five Hybrid Cuttings (including one WHITE)..... 1.75 each

Ten Hybrid Cuttings (including 2 Whites; 1 White-col.-Lip)..... 1.50 "

25 Hybrid Cuttings (including 4 Whites; 3 White-Col.-Lip)..... 1.25 "

Typical of the Hybrids from which these back bulbs are being cut are such famous names as, Lc George Baldwin, Lc Clint McDade, C. Florence Patterson, C. St. Petersburg, Lc Louella Parsons. How else, for two dollars or less, can you acquire such TOP QUALITY hybrids that will bloom in two years?

Daniel Ryerson, Box 805, Homestead, Fla. Please ship Hybrid Back Bulb Cuttings (your selection) via Express Parcel Post Air Parcel Post Air Freight (If I have checked Express, charges will be collect. Otherwise, I will refund charges.) Enclosed is check or money order for \$ _____.

Name _____

Street, City & State _____

LET'S TALK ABOUT BACK BULB PROPAGATION

Back bulbs with no live roots of their own are of no benefit to the mature plants. Instead, they expect the front bulbs to manufacture food and pass it back to them. Unless "shocked" into doing so - by being cut away from the plant - they seldom bother to grow a new lead from a live "eye". Why should they, while they have the front bulbs to support them?

An "eye" is a small triangular protrusion at the base of a bulb. Live eyes are light green or pinkish green. Dead eyes are black or brown, and withered.

It is advisable to remove an extra bulb, if necessary, in order to have a live eye. For if it is properly propagated, this back portion will grow into a blooming size plant within two years - an effective way of increasing your stock of plants.

HOW TO START BACK BULBS. As a rule, back bulbs should not be potted until they show signs of new growth. They should be placed in a shaded - almost dark - place, where they can be kept moist. If you have many bulbs, line them up in trays of granite chips or sphagnum moss. These can be placed under benches of plants that are not receiving the heaviest watering. If the bulbs are buried, or kept soaking wet, they will rot instead of starting new growth. Some growers prefer to string them, upside down, on a wire line above the bench of plants, spraying with water occasionally.

If starting only a few back bulbs, prop them in a large pot with a little crock and loose osmunda in the bottom. Make no attempt to "plant" the bulbs in the osmunda; merely set them in it. Set the pot in shaded place and spray lightly now and then to keep osmunda moist. Believe it or not, before many weeks have passed, the live eyes will be jutting out into new leads.

If - as in the case of sturdy species and primary hybrids - the back bulbs are nice and plump, two or more have leaves, and new eyes are just ready to break into leads, you don't need to set the cuttings aside to root. Go right ahead and pot them up, just as you would the division of a mature plant.

The only difficulty you will encounter is that the lack of roots is apt to make the cutting wobbly and hard to anchor in the osmunda. Wobbliness discourages new root growth. Use one or more "hairpins" of slender but strong staking wire. These bent wire "hairpins" should be about three inches long. Put the loop of the pin over the middle portion of the rhizome and drive the ends down into the osmunda so that the rhizome rests levelly on the surface of the osmunda but is not buried.

In addition, to this "pinning", stake the bulbs with leaves to an upright length of wire, just as you would in the case of a mature plant.

Also, be equally careful not to overwater. At first there are no roots down in the osmunda, so a light spraying of the leaves now and then will be sufficient. After you see signs of new root growth on the surface of the osmunda, gradually increase the watering. An occasional bloom may appear within a year or less from the time the cutting is potted. This first bloom is seldom representative of what the plant will do on its next lead, for it may be premature, lacking the size and texture produced by a larger, stronger plant.

